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The Meeting of SS. Joachim and Anne

By Pacheco

The Holy Cross Magazine

July



1953

The Sacrament of Penance

BY LEOPOLD KROLL, O.H.C.

RECEIVE the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of his holy Sacraments; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. (The Book of Common Prayer, p. 546).

If any of you have been present at the ordination of a priest, you will without doubt remember vividly this most solemn of all moments—at one moment a man kneeling before a bishop, the next a “priest forever, by the order of Melchisedech.” Try to recall the memories of that occasion, the hushed congregation, a proud and tearful mother and father, the priests standing by to assist in the ordination, the young deacon humbly kneeling before the bishop, who seated on his throne, lays his hands on the head of the ordinand; then with the authority of the Church of God, and speaking in the Name of the most holy and blessed Trin-

ity, says “Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest.”

It is inconceivable that any man would dare to do this or to say these words or to have this done or said to him as a mere formality or an empty gesture. To all those present and partaking in this sacramental rite there can be no doubt but that their actions and words do effect that which they symbolize and say. It would be a blasphemy and mockery were this not so. So by the actions and the words of a bishop of the Catholic Church, a man is made a priest with the authority to forgive or retain sins, to dispense and expound the Word of God and to administer His holy Sacraments.

From that moment on it is both the duty, and high privilege of this priest to do that which he was commissioned to do in the Name of the Holy Trinity. What would you think of a priest who never preached the Word of God to his people; who never tried to bring to mankind the knowledge of Christ Jesus, to apply His Life and Teaching to the individual needs and problems of men and women? What would you think of a priest

who refused to dispense God's Holy Sacraments; who would never baptize anyone into the Body of Christ; who would never celebrate the holy mysteries to feed his people with the Bread from heaven? You would be grieved and indignant were any priest to act in such a manner.

Then also from the priest's viewpoint, how many of them feel that their ministry is being curtailed and impoverished, because so few of their people seem to have any desire to hear the Word of God, or feel the need to be fed with the Body and Blood of Jesus. Many priests are brought to the verge of despair because of this indifference; feeling that they are being prevented from fulfilling the solemn obligations they promised to undertake at the time of their ordination.

Granting the truth of this, why is it that so many both of our priests and laity pay no attention to the first obligation and power given in the words of ordination—"whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained?" A priest is sinfully neglecting a part of his commission if he refuses to

grant absolution to repentant sinners, or refuses to exercise his godly discipline those who are unrepentant. The laity in giving their clergy the opportunity to fulfil this duty, are sinfully spurning a most precious gift which God would give them, namely, the assurance that these sins are forgiven, that their guilt is washed away.

We are quite willing, rather we demand of our priests, that they exercise their prophetic office in preaching and expounding the Word; that they exercise their priestly office in offering the Holy Sacrifice and administering the other sacraments, but pay little or no attention to their kingly office, the right to judge and discipline God's people.

Now under what conditions can this kingly office, this right to judge, be used?

What would you think of the following case? Suppose a priest stood before his congregation and spoke to them thus, "When I was ordained I was given the authority and power to forgive or not to forgive sins. Now I haven't had a chance so far to use this power; I know certainly that some of you before me are willful sinners and some are not. I have no way of knowing just which individuals are willfully continuing in their sins or which are really sorry for their sins. I would be neglecting my duty not to say anything about this, so by the authority committed unto me I absolve all those on my right of all their sins, and I refuse absolution to all those on my left, and will therefore not allow them to receive Holy Communion or any other sacraments." One can easily imagine what a furore this would cause in the congregation. The situation would not be improved were the priest to refuse absolution to the entire congregation as this would be as great an injustice as the other. Nor is the situation improved although many think it is, if the prayer for forgiveness after the General Confession is taken as a blanket absolution. This too would be as great an injustice as the other two cases. Suppose there were someone in the congregation who was peddling narcotics to teen-agers; or a man or woman seeking to involve others in their perversions, j



FOR OUR SINS HE WAS BOUND

mention two extreme cases. Would it be an act of justice to assure them of God's forgiveness? You may answer by saying that of course they would not be forgiven if they were not sorry for their sins and were not resolved to amend their lives. But how is the priest to know this, unless he has sufficient knowledge of their lives and intentions? Would not this be to remove all meaning from the words of the prayer for forgiveness which the priest says? How could anyone dare to think that the words applied to him and not to others?

The General Confession and Absolution have their place. They offer an opportunity for a corporate act of penitence and for the priest's declaration that God does want to forgive the truly penitent. But that is all they do. Definitely they are not the Sacrament of Penance which Christ instituted on Easter night. (cf. St. John 20:19-23.)

In short the only means to an answer is through the Sacrament of Penance. Here only in that Sacrament can a priest obtain sufficient knowledge about the state of another's soul, his penitence, and intention to amend, to be able to pass judgment on that soul.

Only in this Sacrament can the words, "By His authority committed unto me, I absolve thee from all thy sins," have any true meaning.

In this way alone—by making an auricular confession, asking a priest, in virtue of his authority to act as our judge, can we escape the impossible responsibility of being our own judges—I say "impossible" advisedly, for no one can be both accuser and judge. In attempting to assess one's own guilt and penitence or lack of penitence, one of two serious errors is almost bound to be made. Either we will judge ourselves too severely and come to believe that we are such unrepentant sinners that God can never forgive us; or we will be too lenient with ourselves and presuming on God's mercy will continue in our sins. Both of these attitudes can cause great damage to one's spiritual life, and as a result to one's emotional and intellectual life as well.

I have found from experience in dealing



BY HIS PASSION WE ARE FORGIVEN

with souls what great relief the Sacrament of Penance can bring to a soul suffering from the terror of a "guilt complex," or what a wholesome, fruitful sense of sin and what real repentance it can give to a careless, lax soul.

The purpose of this sacrament is not to make people feel more guilty, but to make them come to a deeper realization of their responsibility, and by acknowledging and accepting this to be freed from the anguish of a guilty conscience by the words of absolution. It has always been a cause of wonder to me why people will unburden their souls to a psychiatrist yet refuse to confess their sins to a priest, who alone can say, "Go in peace, the Lord has put away all thy sins."

Is it not a greater tribute to our humanity to admit that one is a responsible human being and therefore capable of incurring guilt by one's misdeeds, than to falsely minimize our guilt as so many psychiatrists do? A leading doctor in one of our largest mental institutions has told me that only a very small percentage of his patients have ever used the Sacrament of Penance. In his

opinion many of the patients would not be there had they been taught the use of this sacrament.

One of the greatest joys a priest can have, is to assure a penitent of God's forgiveness. To see the joy and relief which God gives to a soul when it is absolved, brings vividly to mind our Lord's words, "There is greater joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." We should always remember that absolution will never be refused because of the grievousness of a person's sins. Only the obvious lack of repentance can be the reason for a priest to refuse absolution. We should never doubt God's willingness to forgive us, no matter how many times we may have sinned or how horrible our sins may have been.

Our Lord could do nothing only with the Pharisees, who would not admit that they

were sinners, nor with Judas, who despaired of God's mercy. All other sinners, harlots, thieves, adulterers, corrupt officials, came to Him in penitence, were forgiven their sins. In this Sacrament of Penance our Lord is still carrying out His work of mercy and assuring men that He is the Father of sinners.

There is one final thought in regard to the incurring of guilt and its removal by means of this sacrament which I wish to mention. We are apt to forget that our sins make us guilty not only in the sight of God but also in the sight of our fellow men. No matter how secret we may think our sins, each one does in some way affect other people and is an offense to them. So in making our confessions to a priest one should remember that through him we are confessing not only to God but also to our fellow men. The priest is both God's representative and man's: when he absolves us he therefore gives us God's forgiveness and the forgiveness of any human being we may have sinned against, even unwittingly. The priest sometimes directs the penitent to make a general apology in the way of a penance, whether this is done or not, it should never be forgotten that in being absolved we are restored to a relationship of love both to God and to all His children.

This sacrament is then the immediate practical application of our Lord's Atonement Sacrifice, whereby we are made at-one-ment with God and with our fellow men. In His infinite wisdom God has provided us with the means to assure us both of His mercy and of our forgiveness. Are we not being ungrateful if we refuse to use such a precious gift? Are we not also being unwise if we presume to rely on our own feelings and judgments in regards to penitence? Would it not be much wiser and safer to submit ourselves humbly to the judgment of His Church, which is brought to us by her priests, who have been given the power of the Holy Spirit to act as judges? It is a humiliating experience to confess our sins to another human being; this is one of the surest means to overcome our pride which is the prolific source of our sins.

Devoutly Kneeling

BY ANNE TROTT TALMAGE

VI.

ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

If we could only recognize that here
On earth the man who stands alone
lives not

According to the perfect plan where
fear

Was never meant to have such hold.
The lot

Of man need not be lonely and attune
To dread. He has but to accept his part
As one within God's family. Then soon
The sharing of his life will make him
start

To understand how it must be above
Where the eternal law of order based,
Since long before the birth of time, on
love

Holds power absolute. If we but faced
This truth and claimed it for our own,
Ours would be greater joy than we
have known.

The Leper's Story

BY JUSTUS CHRISTIAN

Introduction

to my good readers of "*Lepers' New World*"

I THINK I can say a little of what I know and my experience as a leper concerning leprosy. Certainly in general opinion leprosy is regarded as a secret weapon and also as a disease to be feared. In fact a leper is counted to be in the background of the new world and despite that he is feared and despised or shunned; he is always unnoticed in the field of socialism. Many writers stated that leprosy is not a disease of filth but I am against such opinion. In 1938 I accompanied a friend on his first visit to Lepers' Colony, Yaba, Nigeria; there I noticed some deformities of hands and feet, nasal disfigurement, blindness and involvement of the spleen, etc. What a terrible dream I had during that night. In the following morning I wrote to my uncle to tell him of the awful sight during my visit to Yaba. Yaba Hospital for lepers, which is always kept clean, consists of lepers of different nationalities, nevertheless victims of leprosy are in the New World, for they are isolated from the world of civilization and have made a home of their own in the New Created World. If one should pay a visit to the Lepers' Colony at Kissy, a town about two hours away from Freetown in Freetown, you will pray to die the death rather than to live to suffer such deformities. There is Anhydrosis, Claw hands, Opaque little nails, Keratitis, etc. There are so many cases that need surgery repairs that not one case is saved in that jungle of the New World.

The lepers' motto there is, "Life for Life; one is at hand."

Lepers' Life

Lepers' Life is the main talk among the African Youth of today. Leprosy is a disease which belittles the rich and puts him behind the civilized world. It separates one from the society of good and healthy friends. There are some illnesses which could not hinder

you from associating yourself with people, but leprosy and tuberculosis are what healthy people are afraid of. I learned from a good friend of mine who was a doctor in the British Army (R.A.O.C.) in Sierra Leone in 1942, that actually leprosy is not an incurable disease because when the sufferer in the early stages of the disease starts to receive good treatment could be half cured or arrested, i.e., the disease will get weakened, it will not get finished in their body and on the other hand it will not continue to develop. Whether this is true I cannot tell. Any sufferer of leprosy knows that he or she is nowhere in the civilized world for they are isolated from friends, dependent on the charity of others, and despite his wound, itching, and disliking perspiration accompanied by its awful scent. The leper is always restless and passes his life without sleep. This awful disease is now very common in Africa. People wander from place to place seeking for where they could be cured, but in vain. Some British subjects leave British Colonies for French Guinea, and some French for the British Colonies, yet no success. In every street and lane, you will find lepers not to mention churches, courtyards, wharfs, and market places.

Dr. W. B. R. Beasley

Dr. W. B. R. Beasley's visit to Kailahun together with the Chief Nurse, Mr. Patrick Siafa of Holy Cross Mission, Bolahun, in 1952, caused the all round talk in the Colony and Protectorate of Sierra Leone, that the best medicine for leprosy is now in the hand of Dr. Beasley of Holy Cross Mission, Bolahun, Liberia.

My Arrival From Freetown to Kailahun

On receiving a telegram from a lady friend announcing Dr. Beasley's tour, I left Freetown on March 1st and got to Kailahun March 2nd. On the 14th March, 1952, I went to one of my good English friends (Mr. E. M. Atkinson, then Acting District Commissioner of Kailahun) and told him I would like to leave the District Head-

quarters for Liberia, because I am a Nigerian and had spent some years in Freetown, from where I got to Kailahun seeking for the doctor. He gave me good advice and bid me goodbye. Dr. N. G. D. Campbell, of tryps service, Kailahun, was then a perfect gentleman who definitely told me there was no possibility of getting through in way of receiving treatment in trypts. Before leaving Kailahun I inquired from friends where I could get Dr. Beasley. One Liberian mail man informed me that the doctor had gone to Vaahun in Liberia. I had to pick up lorry on the 17 March, 1952, and drop at Pendembu. There I found a passenger train for Baima and there again picked up a lorry for Dodo. On the same day I walked about four miles in the thick forest for Bawalla where I was welcomed by the Paramount Chief, Joseph Ngaimah, whom I had known in Freetown as a police sergeant, immigration branch. He took me with his two hands as a brother Christian. He showed great kindness to me. I shall never forget my good days with P. C. Ngaimah. Anyhow the short time I spent with him was as a year to me. Not to waste my time I had to start off for Vaahun Town which is about fifteen miles distant from Bawalla. I left Bawalla about 8 a. m. and got to Vaahun about 4 p. m. I was slow in my journey because of my illness which affected my legs and more due to the hilly thick forest through which the only foot path to Vaahun

was about a foot wide. On my arrival Vaahun, I reported myself with a note giving me from P. C. Joseph Ngaimah to the Customs Officer. He demanded my luggage for search. He directed me to the chief's compound where I met the chief and his men sitting around him on his verandah. I greeted him and he asked what was my mission. I presented him a note from P. C. Ngaimah which he read and then ordered one of his men to lodge me. On the following morning he sent for me and said that I was unfortunate to be at Vaahun at this time for the doctor had left Vaahun for Bolahun. Being very tired I was obliged to spend a week at Vaahun before I left for Bolahun. It took me two days to get to Bolahun but before I could get there I had to pass my night in the forest where I hid myself beneath a fallen big tree which protected me from the dew. That night was dreadful. The birds were singing. Monkeys were jumping from tree to tree and the chimpanzees making their loud noise. Although I got a place to shelter myself, nevertheless I got no sleep throughout the night because of fearfulness. The next morning I had to leave the place about 6 o'clock and about 6 p. m. I had been near to Bolahun. It was about this time that a tall stout and good looking white man and his two boys met me in one corner of the forest where I sat down having my rest. This gentleman stopped and asked me what brought me there. I replied that I had been seeking for the doctor but people said that he was not at Bolahun. This gentleman gave his name as Rev. Fr. L. A. Taylor, OHC, Bolahun, Liberia. The gentleman pitied my condition and before he left gave me a packet of biscuits and advised me to get up and walk quickly so as to get to the town before night. I did as he said and got to Bolahun about 8 p. m. I passed my night in the hospital and in the following morning I reported myself to the doctor whom I had been seeking for so long. This young medico, whose features expressed gentility and kindness, proved himself in his actions that he was actually a born Christian. He asked me to wait for a man to take me to where the lepers are building their home. He gave



JEEP WITH ITS LOAD AT VEZALA



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, BOLAHUN

the best kind treatment a foreigner could receive. In spite that I am a leper, he held my head and examined my ears and the rest of my body, and on the arrival of the man in question, Pa Musa Kiohimba, he ordered Musa to go with me and to lodge me. Before we could leave the hospital, the doctor asked for my name and of what country I belonged to. "I am a Nigerian, and my name is Justus Christian" I replied. He gave me a note for Rev. Fr. Parsell who was so kind as to give me food which lasted me for a week.

Lepers' Camp

Yet still, there is a lot for a leper to think about in the life. In an old weeded farm surrounded by thick forest and a running stream, isolated from the town of Bolahun about two miles, is still an old farm house to contain four people. Here I was led by the head man Musa who introduced me to the chief among the lepers, Bobo Dee. Hard life actually I came to experience. The life here was harder than the torrent of my illness. What about the hospital where the lepers receive their treatment?" was my question. The reply was that the lepers have to build their hospital before they can be treated. Oh Justus" I said, "not brought up in man-

ual labor, neither do I know my trade in native life. Tortured and tartared by illness, unable to walk, and every part of my body has sores. Fingers and legs affected, how can I cut sticks or carry them for housebuilding?" On the other hand I was not having even a penny to buy food for myself. No cloth or blanket to cover myself as I was then sleeping in an open air because of no lodging place. One of the lepers, kind and sympathetic, had to cut palm leaves and tied them to a big tree and here I had to sleep for two months.

Lepers' New Home

The cutting of sticks was started by four young men who really meant to build a hospital where they could receive their treatment. The Rev. Fr. J. Parsell and Dr. Beasley tried their very best to see that the new lepers' home was built by the natives. They approached the section Chief, Momo Hina, that he may have his subject consulted on the subject of building the new lepers' home where every leper from any part of the world could be treated. Chief Momo Hina promised to have his men do it but afterwards failed to fulfill his promise. This sort of disappointment became so discouraging to our masters, and this also led the

lepers to fight for their new home. The work is very hard and our lives harder to describe. God Almighty has not forgotten his poor sons. Although we had no food, no cloth, neither had we money to buy them, yet we continued to do our best to have the buildings finished. The doctor himself strived much to see that we get a place of treatment. He too, and Father Parsell who is generally known by Africans as Father of the Poor, put great effort in supplying us rice and other necessary things to let us forget our loneliness, even still they are fighting more and more to get the lepers cured. Under hot sun and heavy rain Dr. Beasley daily visits us, despite the two miles travel in the lonesome and hilly road leading to the camp. Anyway, we succeeded in finishing the house in two months.

Dr. W. B. R. Beasley's Great Work

Surprising friends and citizens to hear that the lepers' new home for treatment has been built, on one Monday afternoon we saw the Rev. Fathers, Sisters, Dr. and Mrs. Beasley and the Bolahun children and some others come for the dedication of the new home which received the name Mbaloma. To bring the reader to know about Dr. Beasley's fame in the British and French Coasts—we were eighteen in number within two months, whilst we were four for the first month to start the building. We started to receive treatment on June 5th and that very week we received nine new lepers from Sierra Leone and French Guinea. Before the end of June, new lepers numbered fourteen.



SISTER SUSANNAH, DR. BEASLEY AND NATIVES

These new lepers, seeing our labours in the first house and the doctor's interest, resolved to build a second house which is now nearly completed. Lots of people are still rushing up to the learned doctor for treatment. I have got in my hand my record about nine other new comers for the third house, and we expect the total numbers of lepers to be about forty-eight by the end of August.

My Dreams Come True

One should have faith in God, be diligent in prayer, and also meekness and charity very essential. I had for the eight years of my life as a leper been asking for where could be cured but nowhere. I had been deceived by native herbalists who received lots of money from me to cure me in a week. Some ask for a pan of rice, two pounds, sheep, a cock, seven coweries (shells) and a bottle of oil, to give to the devil which after me. Some ask more than that. Again not to say much about the sorcerer who predicted my future how and what I could be cured. Afterwards, all is vanity. There are some lepers here who have been sick for sixteen years and in judging their past lives with the present, I have to be a bit courageous and look to the Almighty Father. I had long since lost all hopes that I'll never see where to get my new life but now He has put me in the hands of His beloved son who are now our masters.

The Effect of Treatment

Never in the days of my life had I seen a leper cured, though, if at all there's a cure for that. I have never seen a quicker and effective drug as this of Dr. Beasley's. For only two months of treatment all the deformed lepers were able to work, the skins got blackened, the sores in turn gradually healed. I am a typical example of this case. As I stated in the first part and to shorten my statement and description of my condition, I could not easily be distinguished from one who had newly smallpox and blisters all over my body. One would feel bad to see me near him. There were flows of water, very bad odours from my blistered legs and my body was covered with craw-craw, including scratches of scabies. I wish anyone mi

ve seen my condition two or three months ago, and to compare it with my present health. I give much thanks to the missionaries of Holy Cross Mission, Bolahun, the doctors and his good dressers, Patrick Siafa and Martin Kooli. The lepers are now very happy for they can do some work to help themselves. Dr. Beasley's work regarding lepers is more than tongue can tell. Many of the lepers have experienced great reactions. For the readers' information, despite the scaly parts and red scars of the lepers' body, you could know of your approaching recovery by the feelings you experience when you cease to feel numbness. This is another proof of the treatment. Another is the blocking of the nostrils and awful perspiration which keeps the leper from his good acquaintances. In short, all have ceased. I would not make mention of some lepers who could not on their arrival to this Mbaloma, walk the distance of one hundred yards a day without a person to hold his hands as you see in the cases of the blind people. Now I could walk about fifteen miles a day, and even climb palm trees and do swamp rice planting. All these are blessings from God to the Missionaries and Doctor, even to us, the lepers who go sorrowing. I also appeal that the whole Church connecting to Holy Cross should always pray for us.

Rev. Father Joseph Parsell

Actually this is my first visit to the Republic of Liberia, and despite being a foreigner in this town of Bolahun, I have come to see here a great difference between the people here and those under the British Flag. The Father of the Poor (Rev. Fr. J. Parsell) has a lot to do concerning his evangelical work and his caretaking of the great majority of orphans and needy. Father Parsell is witty and sympathetic and he is against the action of man's inhumanity to man. As Dr. Beasley, he holds the principle of the Golden Rule "Do to others as you wish them to do to you" which contributed to love one another. Rev. Father Parsell welcomes the rich and the poor and treats them alike. More like the Good Samaritan, the Rev. Fathers L. A. Taylor and A. Krone who have great interest in visiting the lepers,



DR. BEASLEY CASSING THE JEEP FOR TRIP TO MBALOMA

preaching the gospel and sending some presents to them.

Father Krone

Rev. Father Krone seemed to be another man to whom we owe much thanks. Like an experienced man in medical work, Rev. Father Krone has no fears in approaching the lepers and talking to each in a friendly way that we do not expect. He is very kind and friendly to all who know him. His simplicity in life makes lots of people seek to know him even the poor in general.

Sister Hilary

I beg my readers to note the comments frequently made by the Hansens re the Sister Hilary's good work in African General Hospital, Holy Cross Mission, Bolahun, and the important part she has been playing in regards to the treatment of Hansenosis or lepers in their new lives. The Modern Florence Nightengale as we call her is never tired in treating the outpatients, even people with different cases as ulcers, burns, etc. She is a good worker, sympathetic, simple, kind, and in short, very generous. I could only compare Sister's Hilary case with one English Nursing Sister, Miss E. M. Lister, who took great pains in visiting lepers and washing their wounds in Lepers' New Colony, Fegge-at-cano, Northern Nigeria. Miss Lister has to walk eight miles to nine miles every day to and from Fegge to visit the lepers. So Sister Hilary, a good and strong worker, who never overlooks the weeping of the poor for

help, has to bear in mind, that all the poor, lepers and non-lepers, still pray for her long and healthy life.

Senior Sister Susannah

One of the greatest loves in my life has been the love of GOD'S Word. I don't know what many people's lives would have been if the Christian education had not been out in Africa. Still now, there are people who have not seen white men, not to mention schools and churches. In some parts of Nigeria, people live who put on animal skins and they live afar in the Northern Jungle of Sokoto and part of Katsina Allah, and among these people we get Buzzus, Fulomis and Mumelis. It is very hard to get these people out of the jungle and heathen life for centuries, but Christian education has played the part of bringing them to the modern Christian Life. So Sister Susannah is doing the same thing in trying to develop

Christian Education in the new Lepers Home, Mbaloma. We are only two Christians among the lepers of thirty-two, and the rest thirty were typically heathen or pagans as we could compare them with the days of King Solomon and his wives. As far as two months ago, Sister Susannah started to show GOD'S Word to the pagan Hausens or lepers, and now many of them hold morning and evening prayers and most of them too could now read books. It was last month, July 1952, that James Yengbi, one of the patients and a Christian too, applied to Sister Susannah for books for the lepers and he was given three Primer Books for their studies. James Yengbi who volunteered to help the lepers became a good teacher and it proved successful.

We wish Sister Susannah good speed and long life in her Christian duties. To James Yengbi we also pay much thanks to his efforts to bring the pagan lepers to light.



The Beatitudes

BY BONNELL SPENCER, O.H.C.

VII LOVE

Matt. : 5:9. Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be called the children of God.

SURELY, last month, we reached the climax of the Beatitudes. The pure in heart shall see God. How can we go beyond that? Is not the Vision of God the goal of the Christian life? Of course, in this world the pure in heart see God through a glass, darkly. They must wait till the next to see Him face to face: But as far as this life goes, have we not reached the end, when we see God? Must not the seventh Beatitude be an anticlimax? Should we conclude that somehow it has been misplaced, that it belongs earlier in the series?

The Vision of God is the goal of the Christian life. Our eternal destiny is to know God and enjoy Him forever. In this life, however, this is not the end of our spiritual pilgrimage. John gives us the reason in three short words, "God is love." (I John 4:16) When we are united to God in purity of heart, He sends us forth to do His work in the world. This can be illustrated from the lives of all the greatest saints. It is the answer to that serious reason which many give today for not pursuing sanctity. To seek personal holiness, they say, is selfish. It is trying to save one's own sick soul, instead of ministering to the needs of others. Such reasoning is an instance of the prevailing disease of activism. It rests on two false assumptions: first, that our primary responsibility is to help others; and second, that we can help them in our own strength.

Our one and only absolute responsibility is for our own soul. That is the only soul whose destiny we can determine. It matters not what we may have helped others to find God. But by our rejection of Him we become a wastaway, we have failed utterly. No other soul can take our place. In saying this, we are not unmindful that, at all stages of our spiritual growth, there is a call and obligation to service. That vocation follows

from the very nature of love, which is an activity. "Love must act, as light must shine and fire must burn." The love of God cannot flow into our hearts for our own private consumption. Self-centered piety is simply one form of sin, one way of rejecting God. In order that the love of God may flow into our hearts, it must be able to flow out again in service. We partake of the love of God by participating in His activity of loving. But our first obligation is to open our hearts to His love. Until we have done that, we have not even begun to do His will for us.

Without God's love, we cannot love our neighbor. We cannot generate love in our own hearts; we must borrow it from God. Our attempts to help others in our own strength result only in our hurting them. At best our efforts minister but to their bodies and minds in a way that suggests that they can find ultimate happiness in the terms of mere earthly well-being. That is the great tragedy of so much modern philanthropy and of some hard-working, well-meaning, but misguided doctors, psychiatrists, educators and other professional people. It is the tragedy of good intentions frustrated by ignorance of man's true nature and spiritual destiny. Far worse is the so-called love of neighbor which is actually only an outlet for over-weening ambition and the desire to dominate. A quip in *The Reader's Digest* years ago expressed this attitude beautifully. "He is the sort of person who lives for others. You can tell the others by their hunted expression."

If we would love our neighbor, we must first for his sake be sanctified. To the extent that we are truly sanctified, God will work through us to serve others. The lower levels of the spiritual life will prepare us for those ordinary good works of which we thought when we considered the blessedness of the merciful. But when God plans to use a soul for some great work, He first lifts it to the higher levels of sanctity. And since He loves to use the foolish things of the world to con-

found the wise, and the weak things to confound the mighty, He often chooses for His greatest works the most unlikely ministers.

A dramatic example of this is the career of St. Catherine of Siena. She was the next to the youngest child of a poor laboring family, born in the fourteenth century into a society in which it was rare for women to have any influence in public affairs. She never learned to read or write. At an early age she was inspired to dedicate herself to God. When her family tried to get her to marry, she flatly refused. She patiently endured, yet firmly resisted their none too gentle efforts to make her do their will. An instance of how she turned these trials to spiritual account, making them not an expression of self-will but a surrender to God, was her attitude when her family made her the household drudge. She pictured to herself that in serving them she was ministering to Christ and His disciples. This God-centredness eventually prepared her to be lifted to the spiritual heights and persuaded her family of the reality of her vocation.

She was given a little room in the cellar of her father's house where she could live as a recluse. There she experienced the dark night of the soul and was raised to the unitive way. But she did not remain in her cell. To everyone's astonishment she emerged to embark on a career of amazing activity for a

girl in her early twenties. She refused to enter a convent, but became a member of the Third Order of Dominicans, who live in the world. Before long she found herself establishing peace between the leading families of Siena. A band of disciples gathered about her and her fame spread. Soon she was being called to other cities, first to settle the internal quarrels, and then to serve as an ambassadress of peace between the states of Italy. Everywhere she went, she moved souls to penitence to such an extent that priests were assigned to travel with her to hear the confessions of her converts.

Finally the city of Florence sent her to the Pope. For seventy years, to the great distress of the Church, the Papacy had been resident in Avignon, a city which was but just across the border from France. All the Avignon Popes were Frenchmen and were largely under the domination of the French king. The Papacy had thus lost the international status it had had in Rome, and the Church had fallen on evil days. All who had its interest at heart had been hoping that the Pope would return to Rome. It was Catherine of Siena, this unlettered young girl, who finally persuaded him to do so. The death of the Pope shortly after his return and the unfortunate choice in his successor plunged the Church into fresh troubles and Catherine died of a broken heart. But in getting the Pope back to Rome, she had accomplished an amazing mission for a girl of thirty.

Her career is a good illustration of the Beatitude, because it answers two questions which we must ask. First, it shows us why it comes where it does in the series. Catherine was able to engage in the role of peacemaker between families, between states, and ultimately between the Pope and the Church only after she had been raised to purity of heart by her earlier spiritual struggles and by the period of solitude and prayer. If she suffered from the modern disease of activism, and felt that her primary duty was to rush about doing good, she might have been a successful housewife, or a nun, or some long forgotten convent, but she would have failed to do the good that God



HEAD OF CHRIST
By Jan van Eyck

led her to do. Instead she strove, first of all to give herself to God. He accepted her offering and united her to Himself. This was the joy to her, of course; we cannot begrudge her that. For God, having made her His own, sent her forth in mighty labors and intense suffering to serve her country and the Church.

Secondly, the form this service took perfectly illustrates the very words of the Beatitude we are considering. Some have been marked with surprise that love is not mentioned in the Beatitudes. Actually, of course,

all the Beatitudes deal with love. Poverty in spirit, mourning for sin, humility, hunger for righteousness and purity in heart are successive stages of the love of God. The merciful represent love of neighbor on the ordinary level. Now in the seventh Beatitude we get love of neighbor in its highest form. Peacemaking, as we have seen in the life of St. Catherine, and as we could equally well have demonstrated by the lives of other saints, is the supreme work that God does for men through those who give themselves utterly to Him. Indeed, it was the work of the Son of God, so proclaimed by the angels



ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

By Barna da Siena

at his birth—"on earth peace." (St. Luke, 2:14)

Peace is the end result of the work of God for man. Yet all is not of divine origin which is called by that name. There is that of which Jeremiah complains in the false prophets, when he says, "They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." (Jeremiah, 8:11) This is the peace that is achieved by closing one's eyes to real evil or by glossing over conflicts by verbal compromises that settle nothing. There is the peace at any price, the slogan of the professional pacifist, who is prepared to sacrifice truth, justice, mercy and love because he does not consider them worth fighting for, or at least feels no obligation to defend them. There is that which our Lord himself rejected, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." (St. Matthew, 10:34) This is the peace sought by the man who, through indolence or timidity, refuses to take sides when vital issues are at stake. None of these false kinds of peace can last, because sooner or later the evil, which has been side-stepped or ignored, will arise to destroy it.

"The peace of God, which passeth all understanding," (Philippians, 4:7) and which alone can endure, must be found in Christ; "for he is our peace." (Ephesians, 2:14). It has a definite price, for He "made peace through the blood of his cross." (Colossians 1:20) He offers it to us, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." (St. John 14:27) To receive it, however, we must be His, "and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Galatians 5:24) Once God has established His peace in our souls, we shall

be sent to preach peace to them that are far off and them that are nigh. This will be accomplished not only, indeed not chiefly, by words. It will be manifested in the divinely given power to "live peaceably with all men," (Romans 12:18), that deliberate refusal to take offense which so completely disarms evil. What is called righteous indignation is so often but the out-cropping of an underlying selfishness. When this has been broken up and removed by Christ, we can perceive a real need in others, compensated for by a belligerence at which selfishness would take offense. Then at last we are in a position to help them.

Our objective will be to reconcile them to Christ. This will carry us far beyond mere acts of kindness toward them. There will be occasions when we must "boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake." The work will be difficult at times; it will break our hearts. But it is the only way that peace can be brought to men. For centuries humanity has been crying to establish peace by conquest, treaties, conference. Today it is further off than ever. Yet in every generation peace has been found by souls who have generously surrendered to Christ, and He through them has brought it to others. Theirs has been the blessing not only of peace but of peacemakers.

They are the true children of God. They are at peace with themselves, at peace with their neighbors, at peace with their heavenly Father. They are members of the Body of Christ, the Son of God, His hands, His feet, His voice, through which He ministers His love to a distracted world. They are the ambassadors of the Prince of Peace.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."



Zeal

BY SISTER RACHEL, O.S.H.

SURTOUT, pas trop de zèle," said Tallyrand. Why is it that so many people think of zeal as something you can easily have too much of?

What picture does the word "zeal" call up your mind? A red-faced man, earnest and ridiculous, extolling the glories of his favorite trout-fly, or political candidate, or football team? Or an uglier picture: a narrow-minded and ignorant man preaching hatred and suspicion against some group he considers dangerous; or a nervous and fussy woman making her family wretched by her excessive demands for neatness and order; or a tactless and offensive person attacking the sincere religious beliefs of another? Or uglier still, the terrible rising flames of the Inquisition, the pitiless faces of the judges, and the tortures of the victims?

"Pas trop de zèle" makes sense against such a background. But it is unfortunate that zeal should be known by its caricature. In reality zeal is a great and holy thing. It is an effect of charity," according to St. Thomas Aquinas. Zeal is eagerness and whole-heartedness in God's service, whether he directed towards hidden works of prayer and love and sacrifice, or towards great outward enterprises and adventures. Without it there can be no apostolate, no missions, no conversions, no reparation, and no real aspiration after holiness.

The works of zeal are three: prayer, example, and good works (preaching and the other works of mercy, such as caring for the poor and the sick, teaching, and every kind of work with souls.)

Prayer is the most important of the works of zeal, and should be placed first in every active life. A sound rule of life will ensure our safeguarding time each day for private prayer, meditation, reading the Holy Scriptures, and intercession. Central in our rule of life should be the devout attendance at Mass, with our communions carefully prepared for and our thanksgiving never neglected.

Example is the next in importance. Our active works will never have more than transitory fruits unless we are sincerely and humbly living the things we preach and unceasingly striving to overcome our faults and make progress in the spiritual life. Eloquent words do not kindle hearts unless they come from a heart itself aflame. We have all heard "excellent" sermons that made no difference to anyone.

God gives to each of us our special work to do for Him. Whatever it is, it must be done *for Him*, and not for our own gratification. We shall do it just as perfectly as we possibly can, but not fret or feel discouraged when, at the end of some job, or some effort, we see nothing but faults and failures. The outcome is in His hands, and the truly zealous soul is content to leave it there.

A good way to test the reality of our zeal for God is to ask ourselves one question: "What is it that has hurt me most in the last week?" Is it some personal rebuff or disappointment, some criticism from others, or some failure of my own? Or is it some serious setback to God's kingdom that comes to my mind first? If our zeal is genuine, it will be the insults to God's majesty, the floutings of His love, that wound us most, and not our small griefs.

In trying to understand what is meant by Christian zeal, we need to recognize the special defects which mar its practice. Just as despair and presumption are the two foes of hope, so accidie, or spiritual laziness on the one hand, and ambition on the other, are the foes of zeal.

Spiritual sloth is characterized by apathy, listlessness in God's service, self-pity, self-centeredness, and boredom. This vice can kill out the supernatural life of the soul altogether. Dante places the gloomy in Hell. There, immersed in horrid brown mud, we see them, who "in the sweet air were sad." Penitence is the chief corrective for spiritual sloth. A soul sunk in gloom and self-pity

needs the sting of compunction, the astringent action of self-discipline, and that conversion which we call repentance. The honest facing of our sins will lead us to acknowledge that we have deserved all we have to suffer and far more. Our self-pity will be turned into thankfulness when we realize that God in His mercy corrects us for our unlovely faults and sins. We shall praise Him because He has not spared us, but loved us enough to send us pain in order to rouse us out of our blind self-centeredness.

Three other things are recommended by spiritual writers as medicine for this disease of the soul: manual work, thanksgiving, and the loyal following of every detail of our rule of life, however distasteful it all may seem. When we feel a bit "put upon," some extra menial or manual task, voluntarily done, can do wonders towards dispelling a selfish and grumpy mood.

The opposite perversion of zeal is ambition. Zeal is an earnest desire for the glory of God. Ambition is an eager desire for glory, all right, but "glory for me." Ambition and "immoderate zeal" show themselves in the unwise espousing of causes, meddling, rash judgments, contempt for others, and over-strenuousness in the spiritual life. It can end in bigotry, fanaticism, and in the terrible hardness and self-righteousness of the persecutor.

Ambition also is cured chiefly by penitence. Penitence is the chief basis for humility in fallen man. True penitence comes from a knowledge of our sins and our sinfulness and weans us away from too great trust in our own powers and in our own schemes for the betterment of our souls and the souls of others. It teaches us great diffidence in the business of reforming and correcting others. Impatience towards our faulty selves comes from pride. We are angry and indignant that such things should flourish in *us*, and they are to come out at once! But true penitence is very loving and very quiet, happy in God's forgiveness and gentle in its efforts after amendment. Patience with self makes us patient and sympathetic towards others.

Humility also teaches us to seek guidance

and to submit our judgment, which we have so often found to be mistaken, to the judgment of others. We shall ask advice of those whose duty it is to give it to us. And such advice received with sincerity, will help to keep us from excesses of zeal. Try taking advice sometime even when your own way seems better. Remarkable things may happen.

The ambitious person needs to learn to love hiddenness. Pray for the love of hiddenness and for a cheerful and contented spirit when things go wrong and we are humiliated by failure.

The over-zealous person sometimes has a disproportionate interest in and devotion to exterior matters, such as details of ceremony, or grammar, or logic, or order. Good and necessary as these things are, they are not the proper objects of zeal. Zeal, it is to be remembered, is an effect of *charity*; the proper object of charity is God and soul made in God's image.

The cultivation of the praise of God is a mighty help in regulating zeal. It is the reversal of vain glory. The vainglorious man seeks self in all his undertakings. The true zealous man longs for God to be praised in every creature. *Benedicite opera omnia Deo mini.*

Recollection, finally, or what Dom Chazet calls "the custody of the heart," helps to sanctify the energy and natural impulse which zeal needs to use in its service to God. By the custody of the heart we keep our wills steadily in God's will, offering our works to Him, and asking Him to help us do them for Him alone, as acts of love.

We have been thinking about zeal in the lives of the ordinary people, and its cultivation in the beginning of our spiritual lives. Let us look at zeal as it is described by a saint, speaking of the zeal of saints. Theresa, in the *Interior Castle*, says "all that it [the soul] can do for God seems nothing to the soul compared to its desire. It no longer wonders at what the saints bore for Him, knowing by experience how our Lord aids and transforms the soul until it no longer seems the same in character and appearance" (*The Interior Castle*, Man. V,

Tr. Benedictines of Stanbrook, Thomas Baker, London, 1921.) And "If her mind is fixed on Him, as it ought to be, she must needs forget herself; all her thoughts are bent on how to please Him better, and when told how she can show the love she bears

Him. *This* is the end and aim of prayer, my daughters; *this* is the reason of the spiritual marriage, whose children are always good works. *Works* are the unmistakable signs which show these favors come from God. . . ." (ibid, Mansion, VII, ch. 4)

The Sin of Respectability

BY CHARLES A. LEWIS, JR.

OF course, "respectability," in and of itself, is not sinful. Certainly, there is no law or precept of the Church which holds that performing such actions may be regarded favorably by society and abstaining from actions which are condemned by society are to be regarded as even undesirable, PROVIDED, that such behaviour arises from the proper motives. On the contrary, The Church enjoins positively a far higher moral and ethical standard than any required on the grounds of respectability alone. The fact of being outwardly respectable, of conformity to a relatively high standard of outward conduct, does, however, contain very grave dangers of falling into mortal sin almost before we are conscious of the danger. This danger may take any one of several forms, and the Adversary is ever ready to take advantage of any or all of our weaknesses or failings.

Obviously, the most common of the sins of respectability is that form of pride which is commonly called self-righteousness. When we are not guilty of the more obvious external sins, those of the flesh, it becomes very easy for us to begin to believe that, after all, we are pretty decent people, and there is not too much wrong with our lives. Remember the story in the Gospel of the young man who went to our Blessed Lord and asked what he should do to inherit eternal life. Our Lord's answer was a recitation of the Law, to which the young man replied that he had followed the precepts of the Law from his youth; whereupon, our Lord instructed him to sell all that he had, give to the poor and take up the Cross and follow Him. And the young man went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Many

of us are like that young man, we are willing to do that which is demanded by our own pride, but we are not willing to give up the worldly source of our pride, our possessions, whether they be wealth, position or whatever. In other words, we really are not convinced that we are sinful and need salvation, or if we recognize the need for salvation, we rely upon our standing in this world to procure our salvation in Eternity. How many of us are prone to feel that we are, after all, "nice people"—we do not lie, cheat, steal or commit any of the more obvious anti-social acts which are justly and properly condemned, hence, that is enough for us. Actually, the plain fact is that we "respectable citizens" are probably more liable to the sins of the spirit than any others. How many of us are guiltless of pride, of avarice, of gluttony, of lust, of indifference or sloth or the rest of the whole sorry calendar of the Devil's stock in trade? St. Paul tells us "For all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God." If, as we are bound to do, we accept the unequivocal statement of the Apostle, can we at the same time indulge in self-righteousness? The two are flatly contradictory.

This matter of respectability contains the seeds of another particularly deadly variety of sin—that of blasphemy. In some circles, it is "the thing to do" to attend Church at times. It may be that some even indulge in the horror of going through the forms of Church attendance and partake of the Sacraments for the purpose of serving worldly ends of secular preferment. There can be no worse form of blasphemy. Our Lord vigorously condemned the scribes and the Pharisees for their practice of outward observance

of the outward requirements of the Law, while they did not show in their lives a true comprehension of the purpose of the Law. He called their practices hypocrisy and them hypocrites, and justly—is not the same true to-day? There is still another aspect of this matter which requires prayerful and careful attention—If you attend Church regularly, and are known to do so, are your actions in your daily life such as would give another grounds for the all-too-common remark “There is John Doe, he is a regular Church attendant, but he is a person who is known to be guilty of sharp practice (or other matters)—if he represents the Churchman, I want no part of it.” We have all heard that

time and again, and, all too frequently, it is unfortunately true. So, John Doe has added to his guilt of whatever may be his oversins, the guilt of causing his brother to stumble.

In the light of all this, it would seem obvious that respectability in the worldly sense has very real dangers. Naturally, the remedy for the condition is NOT the avoidance of social acceptable behaviour, but by prayer, by self-examination and by use of the Sacrament of Penance and acceptance of spiritual counsel and direction, avoiding the pitfalls digged by the Devil for man's entrapment.

Five Minute Sermon

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND ROBERT ERSKINE CAMPBELL, O.H.C.

THE old Currier and Ives lithograph “Thanksgiving in the Country” is obviously an idealistic portrayal of some of the married children returning to the old homestead. The sleigh drawn by a spanking team of horses nears the house, father and mother stand on the porch, bare elms and maples stand about the yard, glistening snow covers the landscape.

That is a meeting evidently planned for in advance, expected with pleasure by all concerned. It is a wholesome family visit. The young people evidently have their own families and new interests. The old couple are apt to be living in the past, amid memories ever more precious with the passing years.

Right it is for families thus to hold reunions, not merely as a token of respect for the elders, but for the steadying effect on the younger set. Old people can be dreadfully possessive, and young ones ever so thoughtless. Here is a chance to restore a proper balance once more. Such a visit, with old and young meeting face to face on affectionate terms, contains great spiritual value. That unseen “something” ties the family together. As the text-books in physics would say, it is a centripetal force.

St. Luke's Gospel tells of another visit, “And Mary arose in those days and went into

the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; and entereth into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth.” How vivid this picture is. The two cousins, each soon to bear an only son, are drawn together by some powerful magnetism. Mary was the younger, and it was but proper that she make the call. Yet Elizabeth, enlightened by divine illumination, cries aloud when Mary kisses her and wishes her peace. “Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” These words are no mere oriental politeness, nor yet unreal exaggeration. All through the gospels understatement is the rule. We search in vain for a false, highly colored or inaccurate story. That is one of the appeals which make the Gospel narratives compelling. They bear the stamp like sterling silver. They ring absolutely true. He who is the Truth can not be recommended to our favourable attention by a string of dubious statements.

Nor can the Blessed Virgin Mary, Her mother. We pay highest honor to her who among all women in the world was chosen to become the Mother of God. We ask her prayers; we join her praises.

If our Bible is true, there can be no reasonable objection to this. As the late

eld, S.S.J.E., speaking of another subject
ce said, "If a proposition is true, the
nurch must use it."

The Visitation of Blessed Mary to St.
Elizabeth rings true. Two women, one older,
the other younger, must know that something
great is about to happen. Mary's part has
been revealed to her by an angel from God.
Elizabeth knows what her husband experi-
enced that day in the temple. Why should
they not meet, each to tell the other that
God had visited them?

That is the point. God had visited them.
All the more reason it was that the two holy
women should greet one another, for mutual
comfort and thanksgiving. It was a family
past unto the Lord.

When our God visits us, how do we re-
ceive His gifts? That He does come to us
very converted man or woman knows.
Sometimes we ignore or forget the opening
verse of the canticle, "Blessed be the Lord
God of Israel, for he hath visited and re-

deemed his people." Study that inspired
phrase, and what do we find?

God's immense love brought Him to
earth. That coming to earth as Man had a
purpose. That purpose was nothing less than
redemption, redemption for you and for me.
Redemption it is from all the base desires of
the flesh and from the blinding glitter of the
world about us. We are set free from false
values, imperfect ideals and selfish aims.

Hence, visitation and redemption came
hand in hand. When heavenly grace melts
our souls, we say that God has visited us.
But what about sorrow, disappointment or
pain? They also are redemptive visits,
though we may be too callous to appreciate
them. Blessed Mary had no easy time when
God came to her. St. Elizabeth must have
been highly embarrassed at times by her
pious John.

"Whence is this to me?" may be our
words too. It is God's deep love calling us
from earth to heaven above.



"And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

THE VISITATION
By Ghirlandajo

Spiritual Growth

BY DOROTHY HOWARD

IT is a strange and disheartening fact that persons who give lavishly of their time, energies and money in the pursuits of fame, education or even pleasure, consider that a modicum of religion in their lives is all that is necessary or desirable.

Some of us may smile, as I did, at the earnest avowal of a former Protestant woman that she was "saved" when she was ten. That there was an uncertainty of her salvation after that childish emotional experience did not enter the good woman's head. Still less could she have grasped any realization of the concept of spiritual growth.

Yet here she is not so isolated as we may suppose. Far too many Christians, both priests and laymen, are satisfied to stop at one of the lowest rungs of the spiritual ladder and confidently expect to attain the identical vision of God hereafter as is vouchsafed to the great saints and martyrs whose lives were given to Christ.

This absence of real effort to strive toward perfection by the average Christian may be due to half-hearted conversion or it may stem from ignorance. In the latter case, the clergy are too often responsible by their failure to teach thoroughly, preach uncompromisingly and practice daily, the full faith of the Church.

Many souls fail to advance spiritually simply because they do not understand either the need or possibility for such growth. Then, too, we may know that we are called to be saints but unless we are shown and led and sometimes prodded a bit many of us would just mark time on the spiritual road.

The Church needs strong, consecrated Christians—the kind who in former years went gladly to the stake for their convictions. But the Church in the world today is filled with spiritual sucklings fed on the pap of diluted, lukewarm Christian teachings by shepherds almost as immature as they are themselves. For the majority, religion continues to be a sort of soul insur-

ance which is safer to have than to be without; and they keep the minimum rules to salvation with blind or indifferent disregard for our Lord's plain injunction, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in Heaven is perfect."

Yet the Church exists for this purpose "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Once we begin to grasp that God desires us to become perfect so that we may be united to Him for all eternity we cannot fail to recognize the need for spiritual growth. Fr. Hughson, O.H.C., in *With Christ* God writes, "Save as we impose limits upon ourselves through sin, there is no limit to our growth in holiness, because there can be no limit to the flowing of the infinite, vine holiness into our souls. If we respond there is an ever-richer partaking of the vine Nature in time and eternity."

But our response is essential. We cannot be filled with God until we are first emptied of self. There must be a continual effort on our part to discover our sinful tendencies and to strive earnestly against them in the power of prayer and sacraments. A daily self-examination together with regular reception of the Sacrament of Penance and frequent reception of the Holy Communion will deepen self-knowledge and help to stimulate true and abiding contrition.

However, the eradication of sin constitutes only part of the process of spiritual growth. We must also practise the virtues which are apparent in the life of our Blessed Lord and we are enabled to do this only by active participation in His Sacred Humanity. We are made members of His Body in Baptism and through prayer and sacraments, good works and faithful response

Holy Spirit's guidance we can and will
 low in holiness.
 Dare we limit our love of God? He has
 led us to the uttermost, even to the black-
 ness of Calvary. It ought not to be a ques-
 tion for any sincere Christian as to how
 He must do to attain salvation. Rather,
 let us ask ourselves how *much* we can do,
 realizing at the same time that we can never
 do enough, but that His merciful Love
 accepts even our small, groping efforts when
 they are made in the spirit of love and self-
 sacrifice.

Then He Picked Me Up

BY S. PHILIP COLEHOUR

TIED my pony to a scrubby mesquite
 tree and heard the other cowboys ride
 off. April in New Mexico always brings
 strong winds with dirt and sand, and I could
 hardly see the ancient adobe mission church
 in front of me.

"I'll stop off here, fellas," I had told my
 companions. "You all just keep on goin'. I
 need to go in here onest in a while to get a
 rest. No, I won't get lonesome. I always
 get picked up by a friend."

The other cowboys were puzzled and gave
 me questioning looks, but nodded and kept
 on. To them the church of St. Francis of
 Assisi in Ranchos de Taos was a real old and
 famous building, sure, that lots of tourists
 came to see, but—well, it was just an old
 building where Mexicans and Indians came
 for meetings before a picture that was painted
 years ago by a guy from Canada named
 Henri Alt.

Slowly I entered, a little embarrassed and
 with my broad-brimmed hat in my rough
 hands. My place in the world, I knew, was
 just sitting in a saddle out on the range. In
 fact, the only reason I had first gone into
 St. Francis of Assisi a couple years before
 was to get out of the heat after a long ride.
 Inside, the walls were white-washed under
 a *viga* ceiling, and on them were faded old
 paintings of *santos*, typically beautiful and
 real as things are in the Southwest. Two rows
 of crudely simple pews crowded on the
 dirt-packed floor, and going up into the
 darkness was a crooked length of black
 beaming stove-pipe.

Candle flames on the altar winked and
 flickered, illuminating the famous painting
 of Christ by the Sea of Galilee that all the
 tourists came to see sometimes. I always
 went in and sat when I knew no one else
 would be there, when I was tired in the way
 only a cowboy can be tired.

I looked at the painting for a second, my
 hat beside me in the broken pew, then
 closed my eyes and hung my head.

No one in Ranchos de Taos could explain
 the mystery of that picture, and men who
 knew had come to New Mexico to look at
 it. When they left, they said they did not
 understand and could not explain.

The mystery? When tourists came, the
 guiding *padre* extinguishes the lights. Then
 slowly the background of Christ by the
 Sea becomes luminous slowly, outlining
 Jesus in glowing radiance. And, above and
 back of His left shoulder, what had been
 just random clouds became the Cross!

That is the Mystery.

When I stop in alone, feeling unwanted
 as I ride among the cacti on wind-swept
 plains, I only have to wait. Saddle-sore and
 dejected and worn, I sit and watch the altar
 in the transept. The *padre* never is there
 when I go in—but Something is. Sometimes
 it seems a gust of wind blows out those
 candles on the altar, sometimes I know the
 flames just burn themselves out.

Then slowly comes the Radiance about
 the Christ over the altar, I see the Cross, and
 I know all-perfect contentment. How long I
 sit there each time, I do not know, for no
 one knows how to measure the feeling of
 Love.

I bask in that luminous Radiance until I
 hear the soft steps of the *padre*, hurrying to
 make the altar bright again. Then I pick
 up my hat and steal out of the church of St.
 Francis of Assisi in the Ranchos de Taos,
 almost running to jump astride my patient
 pony again.

Once more, I have been picked up by my
 Friend.



A Country Editor on Retreat

BY KENNETH L. ADAM

FOR no reason I can explain, the letter was written, signed and put in the mail.

A few days later the answer arrived.

Yes, I would be welcome at Mt. Calvary Monastery.

For me, a monastery was something out of a Sir Walter Scott novel or an M.G.M. movie. It was not easy to reconcile the murky, gothic ideas picked up there with the sunny little village church in which I had been raised. There was an uncomfortable suspicion that in this venture I might be assaying the role of Friar Tuck at a church social—only in reverse.

So it was with apprehension that I approached Mt. Calvary, high atop a mountain overlooking lovely Santa Barbara. The complete silence of the place and its shuttered windows were not reassuring. I knew no one who had been there before. What to expect? But then the great Spanish door of the monastery swung open and I moved into a world apart, a world of friendly peace where the incense of flowers and the hum of happy bees were the accoutrements for that quiet, personal quest we call a retreat.

But I am writing here of material matters—the thoughts a man has when, for the first time, he juggles the gloomy Dane's advice and takes himself off to a monastery. Perhaps they can best be described through a conversation I had with a friend at my club upon returning from my first retreat at Mt. Calvary.

"Where have you been hiding the past few days?" my friend asked.

"Oh," I replied airily. "I've been off to a monastery."

"A what?" the friend exclaimed.

"A monastery."

"But what were YOU doing there?" he asked with obvious disbelief.

"Mostly, I thought about things."

"Didn't you have anyone to talk to?"

I explained about the silence, and he said, "You mean you went three days without saying a thing?"

"About that."

"But how could you do it? How did you get them to pass the butter or tell the time of day?"

"I will admit it's a bit tricky being polite in sign language."

"About these monks, what kind of clothes do they wear?"

"They dress in a white habit."

"Habits are something you enjoy."

"This is different," I explained, "—like a uniform."

"Where did you sleep?"

"We each had a cell."

"Must be quite a place—people going around wearing their habits, talking with their fingers, and sleeping in cells. What do they feed you, bread and water?"

"The food was excellent."

"What was the tariff?" he asked.

"Just whatever you felt like giving."

"I tried that system once in my store. It was a nice, quick way to go out of business."

I reassured him. "A monastery and haberdashery are two different things."

"Must be," he agreed. "But somehow I can't imagine you in a monastery."

"Somehow I can't either. But I was there and I'm going back. Want to come along?"

"Maybe I will."

He did, and so have others of my acquaintance. All have approached their first retreat with a mixture of awe and misgiving. All have come away with a determination to return.

For too many people of our faith, the Church is something dutifully put on and taken off with the blue serge suit on Sunday morning. Retreats at Mt. Calvary have a way of changing that. The impact of successive hours in the House of the Lord comes as a sharp exclamation mark in the succession of 52 hours of worship spent Sunday by Sunday over the year. In like manner, the exclamation mark adds meaning



THE HIGH ALTAR, MOUNT CALVARY MONASTERY

(Photographed by GEORGE F. WELD, Santa Barbara, California)

d conveys excitement. In religious experience, a retreat accomplishes the same purpose.

The incredulity with which my friend at the club received the news that I had been at a monastery has been shared by many Protestant acquaintances. They can't picture me, who they apparently think of as an otherwise normal small-town editor, in a monastery for even a minute. But when I told them a little about a retreat, I notice their interest quickly kindles. They give away the fact that they share the same yearning for the kind of happy peace that comes of obeying the Holy summons, "Come unto Me."

At Mt. Calvary, the way is made easy to me. The gentle guidance of the fathers; the fabulous beauty of the surrounding mountains and sea; the complete absence of worldly distractions; the atmosphere of kindly understanding couched in piety—

these provide the climate in which we may draw nearer with faith. These make it easier, too, to follow the advice of the good Father Tiedemann: that we empty our hearts of our sins by filling them with God's love.

As I have said, I can't explain how I happened to write that letter to Mt. Calvary two years ago.

The New Convent

For the past few years the Order of Saint Helena has been living in cramped quarters at the convent at Helmetta, N. J. Now they are in possession of a new place near Newburgh, N. Y. The Sisters expect to move to the new mother house on June 29. The address will then be: Convent of Saint Helena, R. F. D. No. 4, Newburgh, N. Y.

Book Reviews

THE ATONEMENT IN OUR TIME, by *Martin Jarrett-Kerr, C.R.* (New York: More-House-Gorham Co. 1953) pp xxi + 164. Cloth. \$2.25.

Man "is far enough up the scale to be able to act freely and take responsibility for what he does; but is not far enough up to be able to escape remorse for his failures and sins, still less to escape failure and sin itself."

Man also "comes to see death, not merely as the natural and inevitable stage in the process by which organisms grow, reproduce themselves and then retire from the stage, but also as the threatener of all our hopes, the salutary check, perhaps, upon all our more arrogant enterprises, and the exposure of our deepest limitations."

It is with these two fundamental problems of man's existence, his sin and his finitude, that Christians believe Christ has once and for all dealt and given a solution by His Death and Resurrection.

This book by Fr. Jarrett-Kerr is a modern apologetic of the central doctrine of the Christian faith, namely what God has done and is doing about man's condition, and what man must do to appropriate to himself the fact that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."

The author's thesis is that the Atonement of 'worked out' in the sacramental system of the Catholic Church and in particular in the Sacrament of the Altar, "that puts the Atonement concretely, immediately, scandalously into every moment of time, through the Mass."

—L. K.

FATHER BENSON OF COWLEY by *M. V. Woodgate.* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1953) pp. viii + 183. Cloth. \$2.25.

On the day Fr. Huntington took monastic vows, Fr. Benson wrote him from England: "If we can secure an eternity in Heaven by the Blood of Jesus, we may leave it to God to give, or not to give, perpetuity on earth to those things which we have initiated." The advice he gave to the newly-

professed monk was the ruling principle of Fr. Benson's own life. Since then cordial relationships have existed between the Society of St. John the Evangelist, founded by Fr. Benson, and the Order of the Holy Cross. In the Nineties when Fr. Benson was in America he conducted retreats for the newly-established Order of the Holy Cross, then located in Westminster, Maryland. The notebooks of those retreats are treasured possessions of the Order to this day.

Richard Meux Benson was born in 1838 and at Oxford came under the influence of Dr. Pusey. He became vicar of Cowley Church, near Oxford and in 1866 founded the Society of St. John the Evangelist, establishing the first community for men in the English Church since the Reformation. This book by M. V. Woodgate is the only biography of Fr. Benson written with the approval and assistance of the Society founded. It is an interesting, readable account and one that brings Fr. Benson to us as "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." There are short excerpts from his letters, books and addresses and interesting reminiscences of men who knew him in his old age. He died on January 14, 1915, the last of his generation.

This book can be obtained from the Secretary of Publications, 980 Memorial Drive, Cambridge 38, Massachusetts.

ARMS AND THE MONK by *M. M. Hoffman* (Wm. C. Brown Company: Dubuque, Iowa.) pp. viii + 233. Cloth. \$3.

This is an interesting history of the Trappists in Iowa. Religious especially can profit by this book because it reveals another order in times of both adversity and prosperity. Those whose communities are prospering will be sobered by seeing how in another order men who enjoyed prosperity left a heritage of trouble for their successors. How many years later the present order is reaping the harvest sown by their predecessors in eighty years of adversity. Other

religious whose orders seem to make no progress will here find an example of heroic endurance: men who labor and die in the dark and not until they reach Heaven do they see that their labors have succeeded.

—Brother George

HOW YOU CAN HELP AN ALCOHOLIC STOP DRINKING. By *Herbert R. Moral*. (Noroton Publishing Co., Noroton, Conn). 96 pp. Paper. \$1.00.

"How can you say you love me and yet keep on drinking the way you do? Where is your sense of pride? How can you disgrace your family like this? Brace up, and be a man. Haven't you any will power? You could stop if you wanted to." If you ever have to deal with a true alcoholic you will give yourself time, energy and many a headache if you will master the contents of this small book beforehand. The keynote is that *alcoholism is a disease*. Your alcoholic is a sick man. He is neither wicked nor weak-willed. He is ill. This will be news to many. Some competent medical authorities state that alcoholism is the fourth major health problem in America today. It is estimated that there are from three to four million "problem drinkers" (alcoholics) in the United States and that the number increases yearly. There is no known cure for this disease, but it can be arrested. The author of this book has made a distinct contribution to the growing library on an important subject, and we can recommend it without reservation.

—A. D.

Notes

Father Superior returned from his vision at our southern house and the commencement at St. Andrew's School on June 10 in time to pontificate at the annual Corpus Christi solemnities when we had a number of friends and visiting religious to take part in this service which was followed by a luncheon. Later Bishop Campbell confirmed at Saint Paul's Church, Tivoli; Saint Thomas', Mamaroneck; the Church of the Holy Communion, Lake Mohopac; Saint Luke's, Somers, all in the Diocese of New York. He also preached the baccalaureate sermon at Saint Mary's School, Peekskill,

A VISIT TO THE MONASTERY

Now anyone and everyone can enjoy the beauties of the Monastery at West Park and see the Religious Life as we live it. In pace with the popular appeal of Visual Education, the Order of the Holy Cross offers to lend sets of colored film-slide (2" x 2") to parish groups wishing to study the Religious Life. There are seventy slides illustrating every portion of the buildings and covering the full round of "a day in the life of the monk." Complete description and background information for their effective use is provided by a specially prepared script and a handbook. The latter may be purchased (for \$1.00) for parish libraries, or returned with the slides. The slides are not for sale, but will be sent on loan for the expense of postage and any offering which may be received at their showing. Address requests to: "O.H.C. Slides," Holy Cross Press, West Park, New York.

and gave the commencement address at Saint Mary's-in-the-Field, Valhalla, New York.

Father Kroll while on his southern trip, preached the baccalaureate sermon at Margaret Hall School, Versailles, Kentucky.

Father Parsell is using his furlough (we almost typed "furore") in working to line-up the program for the next three years at the Liberian Mission. His cell begins to look like an old-fashioned general merchandise store, for he returns from his trips with a vast assortment of things for Africa. He does a great deal of trading and comes back with bicycle tires, sanctuary lamps, and draw-net snoods. Shortly after Corpus Christi, he made a tour of the middle west and south, stopping off to preach at the Church of the Ascension, Chicago, and All Saints' Cathedral, Milwaukee. In addition to these ecclesiastical duties, he visited the parents of Mrs. Beasley at Green Bay, Wisconsin; and

we are sure that when he stopped off at the convent of the Community of Saint Mary, Kenosha, he gave the nuns an enthusiastic account of the work of our Mission at Bolahun. Instead of going west, as the prior had planned, he went to Tennessee, first visiting the parents of Dr. Beasley in Memphis, speaking to the Woman's Auxiliary of Saint John's Church there, meeting with the group which had done so much for the Mission. From Memphis, Father Parsell travelled east to Saint Andrew's School, and went down the mountain to Monteagle, where at Du Boise Conference Center, he spoke to two groups of the Woman's Auxiliary on the work of the Liberian Mission.

Father Hawkins delivered the Prize Day address at South Kent School, Connecticut.

Father Bicknell rounded out his fourteenth year at the Valley Forge Conference for young people.

Father Packard conducted a retreat for men of Grace Church, Mohawk, New York, at Holy Cross Monastery.

Father Adams held a quiet day at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, New York City. Later in the month he took part in a youth conference of the Diocese of Albany which was held at Lake George, New York.

Father Gunn conducted a retreat for men of the Brotherhood of Saint Andrew of the Pittsburgh area.

Father Stevens returned from St. Andrew's early in June to be resident at Holy Cross for the summer. He went with Father Bicknell to the Valley Forge Conference where he served as chaplain.

Current Appointments

The summer reaches its climax at Holy Cross Monastery with the gradual return of some of the brethren stationed at our other houses for the annual Long Retreat and Chapter of the Order. No longer is it possible for all of us to be present, for the life in the other monasteries of the Order must be kept going. Usually there is one representative each from the Liberian Mission and Mount Calvary Monastery. As a rule all the men stationed at Saint Andrew's attend, except for one who stays behind to attend to the affairs of the coming school session.



The Long Retreat starts on the evening of July 21 and continues for ten days, closing with the renewal of vows on the morning of August 1. This year Father Turkington, O.H.C., will conduct the retreat. Between the close of the retreat and the meeting of the Annual Chapter we have reports given to the entire community on the work of the other houses. The Annual Chapter (business session) is held on the Feast of Saint Dominic, August 4. Soon after the meeting begins to disperse once more to take up their duties. During this period from July 21 through August 4 we cannot take guests at Holy Cross Monastery.

Appointments during the month of July are usually not many in number.

Father Hawkins is to act as chaplain at Lake Delaware Boys' Camp, Delhi, New York, July 6-9.

Father Bicknell is scheduled to have similar duties from July 13-17.

Father Stevens will conduct a retreat for the Sisters of the Holy Nativity, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, July 13-18.

An Ordo of Worship and Intercession July - August 1953

- Thursday G Mass of Trinity vi col 2) of the Saints 3) *ad lib*—for social and economic justice
- Friday G Mass as on July 16—*for the Priests Associate*
- Of St Mary Simple W gl col 2) of the Holy Spirit 3) for the Church or Bishop pref BMV (Veneration)
—*for the Community of Saint Mary*
- 7th Sunday after Trinity Semidouble G gl col 2) St Vincent de Paul C cr pref of Trinity—*for the poor and unemployed*
- St Margaret of Antioch VM Simple R gl col 2) of the Saints 3) *ad lib*—*for the Society of Saint Margaret*
- Tuesday G Mass of Trinity vii col 2) of the Saints 3) *ad lib*—*for Christian family life*
- St Mary Magdalene Gr Double W gl cr—*for the perseverance of penitents*
- Thursday G Mass as on July 22—*for the Seminarists Associate*
- Vigil of St James V col 2) of St Mary 3) for the Church or Bishop—*for the bishops of the Church*
- St James Ap Double II Cl R gl cr pref of Apostles—*for missions*
- 8th Sunday after Trinity Semidouble G gl col 2) SS Joachim and Anne cr pref of Trinity—*for authors, teachers and editors*
- Monday G Mass of Trinity viii col 2) of the Saints 3) for the faithful departed 4) *ad lib*—*for Christian reunion*
- Tuesday G Mass of Trinity viii col 2) of the Saints 3) *ad lib*—*for chaplains in the armed services*
- St Martha V Simple W gl col 2) of the Saints 3) *ad lib*—*for persecuted Christians*
- Thursday G Mass as on July 28—*for Saint Andrew's School*
- St Ignatius Loyola C Double W gl—*for spiritual discipline*
- August 1 St Peter in Chains Gr Double R gl col 2) St Paul 3) Holy Maccabees MM cr pref of Apostles—*for the Oblates of Mount Calvary*
- 9th Sunday after Trinity Semidouble G gl col 2) of the Saints 3) *ad lib* cr pref of Trinity—*for the return of the lapsed*
- Monday G Mass of Trinity ix col 2) of the Saints 3) for the faithful departed 4) *ad lib*—*for the faithful departed*
- St Dominic C Double W gl—*for the Chapter of the Order of the Holy Cross*
- St Oswald KM Double R gl—*for the Confraternity of the Love of God*
- Transfiguration of Our Lord Double II Cl W gl prop pref—*for the Community of the Transfiguration*
- Holy Name of Jesus Double II Cl W gl cr pref of Nativity (as on Purification)—*for the Community of the Holy Name*
- John Mason Neale C Double W gl—*for the Confraternity of the Christian Life*
- 10th Sunday after Trinity Semidouble G col 2) of the Saints 3) *ad lib* cr pref of Trinity—*for the sanctification of the clergy*
- St Lawrence M Gr Double R gl—*for the deacons of the Church*
- Tuesday G Mass of Trinity x col 2) of the Saints 3) *ad lib*—*for the Liberian Mission*
- St Clare V Double W gl—*for vocations to the religious life*
- Thursday G Mass as on August 11—*for the Order of Saint Helena*
- Vigil of the Assumption V col 2) of the Holy Spirit 3) for the Church or Bishop—*for Mount Calvary Monastery*
- Assumption BVM Double I Cl W gl cr pref BVM—*for the Poor Clares*
- 11th Sunday after Trinity Semidouble G gl col 2) Octave cr pref of Trinity—*for the conversion of good pagans*

Father Drake's Page . . .

The Church To Teach . . .

It seems to be the consensus of opinion among thoughtful people that the Episcopal Church has failed, in a marked degree, to teach the basic principles of the Christian religion. One prominently placed clergyman states that this is so self-evident that it leaves no room for argument. Chaplains testify that men in the armed forces lacked the most elemental instruction and were, for the most part, spiritually illiterate. One suspects that hundreds are Confirmed with little, or no instruction. Every parish priest can cite instances of Confirmed Churchmen with no knowledge whatsoever of how to pray, the meaning of the sacraments, almsgiving, the duty of fasting, sacramental confession, meditation, the privilege of offering mass and prayers for the dead, and so on.

Failure Of Clergy . . .

The officially commissioned teachers of the Church are *partly* to blame. The priest who wonders what to preach about next Sunday, or who scrabbles around at the tag end of Saturday with a few badly digested notes, will have to assume some of the blame. Priests who have ceased to study, and whose prayer life is practically nil (and there are such) will hardly stir up their people's spiritual appetites—let alone feed them. Bishops and priests living on a starvation diet spiritually, need to be fed. Of all the sermons I've heard over the past thirty-five years (my own included), I cannot remember more than a dozen. No wonder the laity seem so bored with much of our preaching, and on the other hand, "drink in" the simple teaching sermon given at a Children's Mass.

Failure Of The Laity . . .

Yes, I think there are two sides to the matter. Some of our laity *won't* learn. Perhaps they *can't* learn. They have closed their minds. They do not want to be disturbed. They are nursing their pathetic little prejudices and are enjoying it. They don't want

"change". They don't like certain truths and practices of the Faith. They "never heard *that*" from dear old Doctor Swartzmuzzle. "Me? Make my confession? Never! Fast? Nonsense. Tithe? I won't have a priest telling me how much I should give to the Missions? We've got all we can do to pay our parish bills—anyhow, I don't believe in missions".

Wishy-Washy . . .

And some, both clergy and laity, are just a bit fuzzy on exactly what the Church does teach. We have the confusing spectacle of bishops and priests denying the Faith to which they have vowed to accept, teach and defend. It is a mystery. How can an honest man continue to earn his living in a Church, while according to his teaching, doesn't even exist? Here is a laywoman with all the advantages of education and culture; an Episcopalian, who is reported to have said "I don't know whether I believe in a future life, but I came to feel that it didn't really matter very much—I think I'm pretty much of a fatalist." Who is to blame? Surely, some time in her life she must have heard the Gospel. Surely, she could have read at least one good book on the Faith of the Church in which she was baptised, confirmed, and, presumably, made her communion. It makes sad reading.

Well, there goes my space, and I don't want to mention other things. For instance, have you seen the publications put out by *The Forward Movement*? They are good. Some new Tracts have just come out. See for a list: 412 Sycamore St., Cincinnati, Ohio. Read them. They will dispel ignorance. They will help deepen your spiritual life.

Cordially yours,

FATHER DRAKE,
Priest Associate

May 20th, 1953